

AMENDED IN SENATE JANUARY 26, 2004

AMENDED IN SENATE JUNE 19, 2003

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 13, 2003

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 29, 2003

**SENATE BILL**

**No. 215**

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**Introduced by Senator Alpert  
(Coauthor: Senator Vasconcellos)**

February 13, 2003

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An act to amend Sections 2100 and 2104 of, and to add Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 2200) to Division 2.5 of, the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to minors.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 215, as amended, Alpert. Youth mentoring and youth development.

Existing law establishes the Governor's Mentoring Partnership, which includes specified legislative findings and declarations. These provisions state that it is the goal of the Legislature to give every young person in California access to a quality mentoring relationship. Existing law defines "mentoring" as a specified relationship to help younger at-risk persons as they go through life.

This bill would revise the statement of findings and declarations. The bill would delete the limitation that the mentoring relationship is limited to at-risk persons.

The bill would also enact the Youth Development Act. The act would create *within the California Health and Human Services Agency* the California Youth Policy Council (CYPC), as specified, to coordinate

state policy regarding youth development. The bill would provide that ~~these provisions would be implemented only to the extent that funds for the purpose of establishing and administering the CYPC are received, as specified~~ *the CYPC shall be convened only after a determination by the Department of Finance that nonstate donations in an amount sufficient to fully support the activities of the CYPC have been deposited with the state.*

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.  
State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Section 2100 of the Welfare and Institutions  
2 Code is amended to read:  
3 2100. (a) The Legislature finds and declares that California's  
4 children are growing up under conditions of great stress that are  
5 resulting in devastating effects on their development and  
6 well-being. Structural changes in society, including the  
7 breakdown and changes in the traditional family structure and  
8 erosion and fragmentation of neighborhood community support  
9 networks, have taken a significant toll on children and young  
10 people's welfare, self-esteem, and academic achievement. To  
11 address these challenges, the State of California recognizes quality  
12 mentoring as a critical youth development strategy, and a  
13 cost-effective method of assisting today's youth to become  
14 productive, contributing and engaged members of society, and as  
15 an important source of data for improving the quality of all  
16 relationships between youth and adults. Research finds that  
17 without the caring support, counsel, and role modeling of more  
18 experienced individuals or exposure to natural support networks,  
19 young people are much more vulnerable to the destructive forces  
20 of apathy, abuse, and neglect. As we acknowledge the increasing  
21 numbers of children who do not have the benefit of positive  
22 relationships, there has been an increasing recognition of the value  
23 of mentoring, an activity that connects a caring and more  
24 experienced person with a young person who is in need of attention  
25 and support. As a means of maximizing public resources,  
26 mentoring is both efficient and effective, relying on volunteers as  
27 the core service providers to create collateral improvements in the  
28 lives of youth. The public investment in the youth development



strategy of mentoring has inspired significant private support at the local level. Mentoring principles may also be used to create mentor-rich environments wherever youth and adults interact on a regular basis, thereby effectively expanding the world of positive adult contacts for youth in their natural environments.

(b) The complexities of supporting mentoring organizations and promoting the formation of positive developmental relationships wherever young people and adults interact requires the coordinated and sustained support of many private and public sector organizations to ensure that their services are available to all young persons who wish to have a mentor. To meet the needs of each young person, mentor services should be available in communities throughout California and mentor-rich environments should be created wherever young people and adults interact on a regular basis. Mentor programs should be culturally and linguistically competent and should embrace the rich diversity of the state. It is the intent of the Legislature and the purpose of this chapter to foster a partnership between the public and private sector for the long-term support of quality mentor programs and mentor-rich environments in which young people can interact on a regular basis with an array of caring adults.

(c) Mentoring California's youth has been carried on by thousands of dedicated volunteers through local mentor organizations and with the very significant contributions of the business community in both time and money. State and local government agencies also operate and support mentor programs. However, the need far outweighs the current available resources. The valuable potential services of many caring adults and older youth continue to go untapped while the waiting list of children in need continues to grow, and distant youth-adult relationships continue to exist where developmental youth-adult relationships could flourish.

SEC. 2. Section 2104 of the Welfare and Institutions Code is amended to read:

2104. For purposes of this chapter, the following definitions apply:

(a) "Mentoring" means a relationship over a period of time in which caring and concerned adults and older youth provide support, guidance, and help to younger persons as they go through life.

(b) “Mentor-rich environments” are environments that create many opportunities for young people to interact with an array of caring adults and where youth feel respected, connected, and affirmed.

(c) “Youth development” is the acquisition of attitudes, competencies, values, and social skills that will carry youth forward into successful adulthood.

SEC. 3. Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 2200) is added to Division 2.5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, to read:

#### CHAPTER 4. YOUTH DEVELOPMENT ACT

2200. ~~(a)~~—The Legislature recognizes that mentoring relationships, fostering critical thinking and problem solving skills, and opportunities for youth to contribute are all important parts of a broader, more holistic view of helping youth to realize their full potential, commonly known as youth development. This view is gaining wider credence in the world of policy and practice. Adolescence is the time when youth need to acquire the attitudes, competencies, values, and social skills that will carry them forward to successful adulthood. It is also the time when they need to avoid choices and behaviors that will limit their future potential. The broader youth development approach attends to both sets of concerns and creates a larger guiding framework to promote positive outcomes for all young people. Substantial research now exists to suggest that developing the strengths, interests, and competencies of young people is also a powerful prevention strategy. The research further suggests that, when consistently applied in the schools, youth developing principles and practices lead to increased commitment to learning and improved academic performance. The Legislature also recognizes that California youth would be better served if the wide range of programs, activities, and initiatives to improve their well-being were guided by a coordinating structure to increase the coherence and effectiveness of their policies and practices. The State of California should have a comprehensive system of programs, services, and supports for youth that is integrated, cost-effective, and sustainable. State government is uniquely positioned to be able to look across the wide array of services and supports provided to young people. It can join forces with communities to

1 both leverage the investments of these programs, and utilize the  
2 talents and interests of young people themselves, to create a more  
3 comprehensive response to young people's needs.

4 2202. (a) The California Youth Policy Council (CYPC) shall  
5 be formed to serve as a vehicle for policymakers across state  
6 systems, including education, health, human services, youth  
7 employment, juvenile justice, and community services, to think,  
8 plan, and act in new, cross-sector ways. The CYPC shall work  
9 closely with the California State Youth Council, established by the  
10 California Workforce Investment Board, to provide leadership for  
11 youth by: (1) providing policy guidance for local youth councils  
12 created by the California Workforce Investment Act (Division 7  
13 (commencing with Section 14000) of the Unemployment  
14 Insurance Code); (2) promoting coordination among the myriad of  
15 community-based youth programs; and (3) addressing critical  
16 issues affecting California's youth. The CYPC shall bring together  
17 a diverse group of representatives from youth constituency  
18 groups, youth serving state agencies, the educational system, and  
19 community-based groups and organizations, to the same policy  
20 influencing table in the interest of fostering and promoting the  
21 positive development of all California youth.

22 (b) Collaborative efforts with the California State Youth  
23 Council, the State Agency Collaborative on Mentoring and Youth  
24 Development, the California Interagency Prevention Partnership  
25 and other similar groups with related goals, shall include, but not  
26 be limited to:

27 (1) Developing an overarching multidisciplinary youth policy  
28 framework in order to guide, monitor, and enhance the state's  
29 overall commitment to young people across departmental lines.

30 (2) Developing common standards for evaluating and  
31 assessing whether any given policy promotes positive youth  
32 development, regardless of its origin.

33 (3) Developing an organized cross-sector method for  
34 collecting and reporting indicators of the development of young  
35 people.

36 (4) Conducting ongoing assessments of the array of services,  
37 supports, and opportunities available to young people, including  
38 the ways they are being involved in policymaking at all levels.

39 (5) Establishing clear evaluation criteria and program quality  
40 standards to be applied across departments and agencies, and

1 developing capacity building strategies to assist departments and  
2 agencies to meet and exceed those standards.

3 (6) Strengthening action alliances among organizations and  
4 individuals committed to youth across sectors and systems.

5 (c) (1) The CYPC shall particularly focus on working in  
6 partnership with other collaboratives committed to establishing  
7 coordinated responses to reduce youth failure and increase youth  
8 opportunities, and with educational systems pursuing  
9 youth-focused strategies of school reform.

10 (2) The CYPC shall provide a communication mechanism to  
11 facilitate collaborative efforts locally, regionally, and on a  
12 statewide basis.

13 (3) The CYPC shall meet quarterly and the rotating chair, who  
14 shall serve no more than two consecutive years, shall be selected  
15 by the membership. ~~Foundation~~ *Nonstate* and private funding shall  
16 be secured to support the work of the council.

17 (4) Members of the CYPC shall be identified as  
18 commissioners. There shall be 25 commissioners. All  
19 commissioners shall hold leadership and decisionmaking  
20 positions within their organization and shall be connected to a  
21 youth-serving constituency. To ensure representation from the full  
22 range of state level youth-serving agencies, commissioners shall  
23 be drawn from the following state entities and organizations:

24 (A) The CYPC shall include the Attorney General, the  
25 Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Superintendent of  
26 Public Instruction, and the Secretary for the Office of Education.

27 (B) The CYPC shall also include one representative from each  
28 of the following: the Governor's Office of Planning and Research,  
29 the California Community Colleges, the Labor and Workforce  
30 Development Agency, and the county superintendents of schools.

31 (C) A maximum of five additional commissioners who are  
32 involved in state-level or regional efforts to reduce youth failure  
33 and create youth opportunities and meet the above referenced  
34 leadership criteria shall be invited to join the council. These  
35 members may be drawn from, but not limited to, state  
36 youth-serving departments, city, county, or regional government,  
37 and nonprofit organizations involved in youth development.

38 (D) The Senate Committee on Rules and the Speaker of the  
39 Assembly shall each appoint one commissioner who shall serve  
40 ~~without compensation. The Senate Rules Committee shall ensure~~

1 ~~that the members described in subparagraphs (A), (B), and (D) are~~  
2 ~~selected and hold their first meeting within six months of the~~  
3 ~~enactment of this chapter~~ *without compensation*. At the initial  
4 organizational meeting, a subcommittee of the membership shall  
5 be formed to create a process whereby the commissioners  
6 described in subparagraphs (C) and (E) are selected.

7 (E) In addition to the members selected pursuant to  
8 subparagraphs (A) to (D), inclusive, there shall be no fewer than  
9 five commissioners, ~~which~~ *who* may be youth or adults,  
10 representing the following types of groups: youth advocacy  
11 organizations, community-based youth services organizations,  
12 service clubs, private foundations and funders, research and  
13 evaluation groups, technical assistance and capacity building  
14 intermediaries, and youth media and communications groups.  
15 Other groups to be considered shall include, but are not limited to,  
16 the following: the California Coalition for Youth, the California  
17 Youth Connection, the California Center for Civic Participation  
18 and Youth Development, Friday Night Live, the YMCA, and 4-H.

19 (F) Not less than 25 percent of the membership of the council  
20 shall consist of young people, from 14 to 24 years of age, inclusive.  
21 The first cohort of young people shall be nominated by the adult  
22 commissioners. Future cohorts shall be nominated by both youth  
23 and adult council members. The young people shall be selected,  
24 trained, and supported as a group, and shall be deployed to  
25 represent the full range of departments and agencies serving young  
26 people.

27 (G) Commissioners selected pursuant to subparagraphs (C) to  
28 (F), inclusive, shall reflect the diversity of California, bridging  
29 geographic, socioeconomic, and racial lines, as well as identifying  
30 youth and adults involved in state programs and services.

31 (5) Commissioners of the CYPC shall serve at the pleasure of  
32 their appointing authority.

33 ~~(d) (1) This section shall be implemented only to the extent~~  
34 ~~that funds for the purpose of establishing and administering the~~  
35 ~~CYPC are received by persons described in paragraph (4) of~~  
36 ~~subdivision (e) from private or other nonstate sources.~~

37 ~~(2)~~

38 *(d) (1) The CYPC is established in the California Health and*  
39 *Human Services Agency and shall be convened pursuant to this*  
40 *chapter only after a determination by the Department of Finance*

1 *that nonstate donations in an amount sufficient to fully support the*  
2 *activities of the CYPC have been deposited with the state.*

3 (2) *The members of the CYPC shall serve without*  
4 *compensation.*

5 (3) The CYPC shall work with private entities, including  
6 nonprofit organizations and foundations, to obtain funding from  
7 private sources necessary to support the work of the CYPC.

